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ABSTRACT

The following topics and objectives are presented as essential for teachers, principals, and supervisors to study in working towards a modern elementary social studies curriculum: (1) objectives in the social studies; (2) trends in the social studies; (3) scope and sequence; (4) materials used in teaching; (5) readiness in learning; (6) number of units taught in a year; (7) emphasis to be placed on the structure; (8) balance in unit titles; (9) the use of specific objectives; (10) thorough evaluation of pupil achievement; (11) democratic living in the classroom; (12) the use of maps and globes in social studies units; (13) current affairs in social studies units; and (14) pupil interest in current affairs. In addition to a discussion of each of the above items, a number of educational philosophies are briefly surveyed. A 29-item list of references is included. (DB)

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SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Since the world is "shrinking" in size due to better transportation and communication, it is more important than ever before for pupils to study justifiable units in the social studies. The following problems on the world scene make it imperative that pupils have the needed understandings, skills, and attitudes to engage in problem solving activities in the classroom.

1. There are wars and threats of war between and among nations such as in the Middle East, in Central America, and capitalist nations versus nations adhering to communism.

2. New nations are formed and the names of some countries no longer exist due to varying causes.

3. Friendships between and among nations change. Nations which formerly were friends became neutral toward each other; they also may become enemies. Friendship can be developed between countries which in the past had relations which were negative.

4. Selected countries may trade much with each other and engage in very little or no trade with other nations on the face of the world.

5. Certain countries have more of the necessary natural resources which make for prosperity as compared to other nations.

6. Technology and inventions change the ways of living of a particular subculture or country.

7. Languages that people speak in the world differ from each other thus making for difficulty in communicating ideas.

8. Differences in religious beliefs and doctrine in different countries of the world can make for misunderstandings among nations.

9. Countries of the world differ much from each other in military strength. Even a small country armed by a world power can become a threat to larger neighboring countries which have less of the effective kinds of military hardware.

10. Leaders change in different nations of the world. Some of these changes come about through elections. Others come about through revolutions and invasions.

11. Many changes occur on the local and state levels in such areas as education, welfare, housing, equality of opportunity, jobs, growth of cities, population changes, pollution, technology, and inventions.

12. There are nations of the world which have much influence over other less powerful countries. The more powerful nations of the world include the United States, the Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, France, Great Britain, and Japan.

Thus, it is important for pupils to have a good understanding of an individual's relationships toward others and of people interacting with their physical and cultural environment. Pupils must learn to get along well with classmates, school personnel, and others in their environment. Human beings in the world must understand others better, along with developing positive attitudes, so that a better life can exist for all. Destroying property and lives through wars and other violent means hinders human beings from realizing their optimum. Too much time is spent in destroying and ruining rather than building up and achieving within a nation as well as within the world. Elementary school pupils

need to develop those understandings, skills, and attitudes which will assist them in becoming good citizens in a democratic society.

Objectives of the Social Studies

Each elementary school, as well as the entire school system, should spend an adequate amount of time in identifying important objectives for pupils to achieve in elementary school social studies.

There are numerous skills in the social studies which pupils should achieve to become more proficient as citizens in a democracy. Among others, the following skills would be important for pupils to achieve.

Skills Objectives

1. Reading social studies content with understanding.
2. Using the card catalog to locate needed reference sources.
3. Using appropiate word recognition techniques to identify new words.
4. Reading for a variety of purposes in the social studies.
5. Using the index and table of contents to locate information.
6. Working effectively together with others in committees.
7. Dramatizing roles and events effectively from various units of study.
8. Using the problem solving approach effectively.
9. Evaluating content through the use of critical thinking.
10. Utilizing creative thinking in coming up with new solutions to problems.
11. Constructing and reading information from picture graphs, line graphs, bar graphs, and circle graphs.

12. Using a variety of reputable sources to gather information, such as encyclopedias, almanacs, films, filmstrips, tapes, records, models, pictures, slides, and resource persons.
13. Presenting information clearly and effectively to classmates and other individuals in the environment.
14. Reading and comprehending current affairs items from recent newspapers and magazines.
15. Listening effectively to the contributions of others within committees as well as the class as a whole.
16. Comprehending the contents of radio broadcasts and television reports pertaining to news items.
17. Being able to disagree politely with others and still present unique points of view on a problem or question.
18. Making charts to convey information effectively in the social studies.

Attitudinal Objectives

The quality of attitudes that pupils have certainly affects the number of understandings and skills that pupils will be developing. Negative attitudes hinder pupil achievement and a lack of optimum development will thus result. The following attitudes, among others are important for pupils to achieve:

1. Working harmoniously with others in the environment.
2. Appreciating the problem solving approach in the social studies curriculum.
3. Appreciating the contributions of minority groups in society.

4. Valuing democracy as a form of government and as a way of life.
5. Appreciating creative ideas suggested by others in the solving of problems.
6. Valuing the inquiry approach and critical thinking in the social studies.
7. Wanting to develop important concepts and generalizations in the social studies.
8. Developing and/or maintaining a desire to read content for leisure time activities as it relates to ongoing units of study.
9. Wanting to utilize a variety of learning activities to solve problems.
10. Having a desire to identify and solve problems in society.
11. Feeling an obligation to participate effectively as a constructive member in society.
12. Respecting the thinking of others.
13. Appreciating the cultural products of people of other lands, such as art, music, architecture, language, and religious beliefs.
14. Wanting to develop the ability to present information clearly and accurately to others.
15. Desiring to keep up with current events and issues as they happen in the world.
16. Wanting to utilize the card catalog, index, and table of contents to locate information.
17. Wanting to develop necessary skills to identify new words when reading social studies content.
18. Feeling the neccesity of reading for a variety of purposes.

19. Wanting to attach meaning to social studies content through pantomiming, role playing, creative dramatics, the use of puppets, and other approaches.

20. Appreciating the use of graphs and charts in simplifying information in content pertaining to the social studies.

21. Wanting to listen carefully to the thinking of others.

Naylor and Diem[1] wrote:

> Every child possesses certain physical, emotional, and social characteristics that make him or her unique. For the most part these differences fall within a range of anticipated norms. Exceptional children, however, fall outside these normative standards. Some have mental or learning impairments that cause them to perform significantly below grade-level norms. Others have superior abilities that enable them to perform significantly above grade-level norms. And some children have visual, auditory, speech, or orthopedic impairments that may or may not affect their ability to meet grade-level standards.
>
> Not so many years ago, handicapped children were denied equal access to public schooling. With the passage of Public Law 94-142, that situation has changed dramatically. Many handicapped children are now being mainstreamed into regular classrooms for part or all of the school day. Not every handicapped child is well served by placement in a regular classroom, but many are. The goal of mainstreaming involves more than the mere presence of handicapped children in a regular classroom.

Understandings Objective

Teachers, supervisors, and principals, cooperatively, should spend ample time in determining which objectives pupils are to achieve and realize. This is true not only of skills and attitudinal objectives but also of understandings objectives. Too frequently, no doubt, trivia has

[1]David T. Naylor and Richard Diem. Elementary and Middle School Social Studies. New York: Random House, 1987, page 441.

been taught in names, dates, and places in historical units in the social studies. These are vaguely remembered or forgotten by learners as time has moved on. Thus, it is important for understandings objectives to be carefully identified. The "explosion of knowledge" has made it doubly necessary to weed out that which is irrelevant and unimportant.

In many cases, understandings objectives which pupils are to realize will pertain to specific social studies units. A first grade unit on "The School" will have different understandings that pupils need to achieve as compared to a unit on "Visiting the Zoo" for that same age level of pupils. There are, however, major generalizations which pupils may achieve that cut across different units of study.

The following understandings objectives, among others, could be important for pupils to realize in a unit on Great Britain:

1. Great Britain is a leading manufactoring country in the world.
2. Great Britain has exhibited much influence in world affairs.
3. This nation is a permanent member of the Security Council in the United Nations.

Trends in the Social Studies

Each elementary school should devote ample time to the study of trends in the teaching of social studies. Too often, social studies has consisted of pupils reading content from their textbook. Social studies should not be a reading course. Reading is one learning activity, among others. Reading content is an important learning activity, but it is not the only experience for pupils in social studies. What can the

elementary school do to keep up with recommendations in developing a modern program of social studies?

Scope and Sequence

A modern program of elementary school social studies places much emphasis upon good sequence among units of study. Too frequently, there has been little or no connection between and among units taught in sequence. One unit of study should be related to and lead harmoniously into the next unit of study. For example, if intermediate grade pupils are studying a unit on the "Age of Discovery," a unit that would be related could be entitled "Colonization in the New World". An area of the world had to be discovered before it could be colonized. The two units would definitely be related to each other. Good sequence could then be a definite possibility between these two units in elementary school social studies. If first grade pupils are studying a unit on "Going to School" at the beginning of a school year, a unit on "Living in the Home" could come in proper sequence with good teaching. The school and its influence cannot be isolated from the home environment. The two environments interact; neither is an island unto itself.

For each grade level, cooperative efforts need to be put forth within an elementary school or several elementary schools to develop proper sequence in social studies units from kindergarten through grade twelve. Thus, the question arises as to which units should be taught first, second, third, fourth, and so on for each of the grade levels in the elementary school.

Good teachers of social studies also need to think of proper

sequence of learning activities within a unit. Generally, one would say that learning activities should progress from the simple to those which are more complex. This would be a gradual process. When thinking of sequence in learning activities within a specific social studies unit, which of the following learning activities should come first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth pertaining to a unit entitled "Living on the Farm"?

1. Viewing and discussing a filmstrip entitled "Let's Visit the Farm".
2. Reading pages 110-115 from the textbook and discussing the contents.
3. Visiting a modern farm and discussing observations which were made.
4. Having the county agent present a set of slides and a talk relating to a modern farm.
5. Developing a diorama within a committee of four members; the diorama would pertain to selected scenes on modern farming practices and procedures.
6. Showing and discussing transparencies on farming using the overhead projector.

Each of these learning activities must be evaluated in terms of the following standards:

1. being meaningful to learners.
2. developing interest within learners for learning.
3. promoting purpose for learning.
4. providing for individual differences.
5. stimulating pupils in wanting to learn.

6. providing for proper sequence within the specific learning activity.

Using a Variety of Materials in Teaching

The social studies teacher must think of variety in terms of learning activities provided for pupils. Variety in learning activities should assist in providing for individual differences. Pupils differ much from each other in intelligence, past achievement in different curriculum areas of the elementary school, motivation for learning, interest in the unit being studied, and ability to benefit from a given learning activity. Thus learning activities must be varied since each pupil in a class will not benefit equally from an ongoing learning activity whether it be reading of social studies content or developing learnings from audio-visual materials. Good readers may enjoy reading social studies materials and gain many important concepts, principles, and generalizations in this kind or type of learning activity. Reading may become the major way of gaining ideas in the social studies for pupils who do much reading and are fascinated with this kind of learning experience. Other pupils may find reading distasteful due to previous encounters in this activity which had negative effects. The negative effects may have been the result of the following influences:

1. the content was too difficult for learners to read.
2. poor methodology was used by the teacher when having pupils read social studies content.
3. adequate readiness was not provided for pupils prior to reading.

4. the teacher was too demanding in terms of purposes pupils were to achieve from reading.
5. too much reading was required of pupils in the social studies program.

Each pupil has a different learning style just as teachers have different teaching styles. The teacher needs to select those learning activities which assist each learner achieve to his or her optimum. The following, among others, may guide to provide for individual differences among pupils and also vary the kinds of learning activities that are provided:

1. making model villages, famous buildings, and toys.
2. constructing boats, cars, airplanes, and trucks.
3. making relief maps and globes relating to the area being studied in a unit.
4. developing books, scrolls, puppets, marionettes, and musical instruments.
5. making costumes pertaining to people of other lands.
6. making butter and a model dairy farm.
7. completing model circus scenes when studying the related unit.
8. making candles, dyeing cloth, and making an oxcart pertaining to units on "Colonization in the New World".
9. developing a pioneer kitchen and covered wagon when studying units on the westward movement.
10. developing dioramas, murals, models, friezes, cartoons, and illustrations pertaining to ongoing units of study.

11. making posters, booklets, and exhibits on important facets of the unit being studied.
12. reading from the textbook or textbooks, selected sections in the encyclopedia, and library books.
13. viewing films, filmstrips, slides, pictures, and other audio-visual media.
14. listening to tapes and records.
15. taking an excursion.
16. interviewing competent resource personnel.

Readiness for Learning

There are several ways in which to think of readiness on the part of pupils guiding achievement in ongoing units of study in the social studies.

First of all, educators generally believe that pupils can benefit from more complex areas of study than was thought possible a decade and longer ago. For many years, it was believed that pupils, for example, should study units on the home and school on the first grade level since these were "close" to the pupil. Pupils experience the home and the school; thus, there is this closeness between the unit being studied and the personal experience of pupils. On the second grade level, pupils might study units on the city, neighborhood, or shopping centers as they exist in medium and large-size cities. These units would branch out further from the pupil's environment as compared to the home and school which were units of study for the first grade level. By the time pupils are in the fifth grade, they may be studying units on Canada, Mexico,

and historical units pertaining to the United States. Thus, pupils on these grade levels would be studying units whose locations are outside of the United States. Historical units on the United States would deal with the past which is removed in time from the everyday experiences that elementary school pupils have. On the sixth grade level, pupils could be studying units on The Common Market Countries, the Middle East, the Soviet Union, Australia, Japan, Southeast Asia, and Brazil. These areas would be further removed from the everyday experience of pupils in the elementary school as compared to social studies units being studied in previous grade levels.

It may be rather arbitrary in some cases as to which grade level specific units in the social studies should be taught. The television set in the home has brought the faraway near to the child. In their homes and in school, pupils view television programs which deal with happenings in London, Paris, Moscow, Rio de Janeiro, Buenas Aires, Melbourne, Montreal, Madrid, and other areas of the world. Thus, elementary school pupils today have much more opportunity to view reality on television screens pertaining to faraway places as compared to learners a generation ago or longer. More accurate, colorful, interesting illustrations in magazines pertaining to faraway places are available to learners than ever before. More pupils in the have had opportunities to travel in the United States and abroad to see scenes and sights than was true formerly. It is no wonder that pupils in the elementary school may be able to benefit from more complex units of study in the social studies than ever before. Many excellent social studies units on Mexico have been taught on the second grade level.

These teachers may be very knowledgeable about Mexico and have the necessary materials and teaching skills to develop interest in this unit. Thus, the social studies curriculum can be adapted to the pupil rather than adjusting the child to the curriculum. Each child should attach meaning to what is being learned as well as developed interest in the ongoing unit of study.

Educators today generally think that readiness for learning can be hastened. This is not to say, however, that difficult learnings are shoved into the throats of children. However, with a rich set of experiences, the preschooler has much background knowledge. If parents then take their children to supermarkets, hardware stores, clothing stores, toy shops, zoos, circuses, and farms, much meaningful information will be developed. Parents should discuss observations made with their children in a polite, kind, and understanding manner. Pupils will generally raise many questions about experiences which they have had. Answers to these questions should be discussed in a meaningful approach. With quality preschool experiences for pupils, this should hasten readiness for developing more difficult concepts and generalizations. As learners then enter the elementary school years, more difficult units of study in the social studies can be taught. The teacher must continually strive to provide quality learning activities in various units that are studied, thus helping the child to experience continuous success when building upon experiences from the preschool years. Parents also need to provide a rich learning environment as their children progress through the public school years. In situations such as these, readiness for learning in the social studies is hastened within

pupils. Contrast that situation with the following where pupils experience an environment which does not build up background knowledge and where readiness for learning in the social studies would be hindered:

1. a lack of reading materials for pupils in the home.
2. the parent, parents, or guardian ignore the children.
3. food served in the home is low in meeting proper nutritional standards.
4. stability is lacking in the home in that members get along poorly with each other.
5. children are rarely, if ever, taken along to buy groceries and other necessities in life.
6. no visits are made to places of interest in the community.
7. money is very scarce in the home; financial security is completely lacking.
8. vocabulary development is not progressing properly due to a lack of opportunities to communicate with others.
9. nonstandard English is spoken in the home and surrounding environment.
10. an inadequate self-concept exists on the part of these children since success is experienced very rarely.

In situations such as these, it is no wonder that pupils lack background knowledge when entering the elementary school years. The social studies teacher would need to adjust the curriculum for these learners

so that important cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domain objectives can be achieved. Learning activities need to be provided which are at an appropriate level of understanding for these pupils.

Teaching Units in Depth

Many teachers of social studies have a tendency to teach units utilizing the survey approach. Thus many units would be taught on the sixth grade level as indicated by the following unit titles which need to be completed in a school year:

1. Visiting Japan
2. Living in Australia
3. The Common Market Nations
4. Canada - Our Neighbor to the North
5. Mexico - Our Neighbor to the South
6. The Soviet Union
7. People's Republic of China
8. Living in India and Pakistan
9. Islands of the Pacific
10. Brazil - The Largest Country in South America
11. Spanish Speaking Countries in South America
12. Countries of Southeast Asia
13. The Antarctic and Its Future
14. Nations of Central Europe
15. The Middle East
16. Visiting Spain and Portugal

It is quite obvious from the many titles listed that the survey approach to teaching social studies would be utilized. Pupils receive a smattering of content from many units of study rather than developing learnings in depth from a few carefully selected units. The faculty members of an elementary school should rather select six or seven units to be taught in a specific school year. Thus pupils would be able to study in depth each unit that is taught. For example in a unit pertaining to Brazil, the following understandings might be achieved by pupils:

1. the art, architecture, and music of Brazil.
2. the political system of that country.
3. the geography of Brazil such as rivers, plateaus, valleys, and plains.
4. the past which lead to present day happenings (history).
5. the culture of various groups and subgroups of people.
6. Different socioeconomic levels and their effects upon group behavior (sociology).
7. exports and imports of Brazil as well as goods and services produced in that country.

It is certain that pupils will understand various people of the world better if units are taught in depth. Limited understandings can be developed of any unit in social studies if a teacher needs to hurry through the teaching of many units in a school year. Pupils need to have opportunities to study human beings from different disciplines that make up the social sciences, namely, history, geography, political science,

sociology, anthropology, and economics. It is certain that pupils won't understand the people of Brazil by studying the system of government of that country only. Pupils also need to understand the values, customs, religious beliefs, norms of society and subcultures, vocations and occupations, products and services produced and sold, imports and exports, the history, and geography of Brazil.

The Structure of Knowledge

Educators such as teachers, principals, and supervisors, alone should not determine what is to be taught in social studies. The content of the social sciences is too complex to be selected by educators alone when developing the social studies curriculum. Too frequently, social studies teachers have taught what is unimportant, trivial, and irrelevant. Social scientists should have an important role in selecting social studies content for pupils in the elementary school. This is not to say that social scientists alone determine content in units of study in the social studies. Certainly, teachers, principals, and supervisors will have an important voice in the selection. Elementary school pupils also have an important task in selecting content for different units of study. The social studies teacher must develop pupil interest and purpose in various units of study. Thus, the teacher will have interesting, appealing bulletin boards for pupils to view. If pupils are to begin a unit on Japan, perhaps the following pictures can be placed on the bulletin board with an interesting title or caption:

1. Japanese workers on an assembly line in a modern factory.

2. a home scene which is accurate and representative pertaining to a Japanese family.
3. persons in fishing boats which clearly illustrates important facets of this industry.
4. a representative urban scene in Tokyo or other large city in Japan.
5. farmers in a rural area taking care of their crops and livestock.

The teacher's goal is to get pupils in wanting to ask many questions about Japan when viewing the bulletin board display. The following questions may be asked by pupils:

1. How are cars assembled on an assembly line in Japan?
2. What are some leading products manufactured in Japan?
3. Who buys these products?
4. How do Japanese and American homes differ from each other? How are they alike?
5. How important is the fishing industry to Japan's economy?
6. How does Tokyo differ from New York City or Chicago? How are they alike?
7. What products are produced on Japanese farms and how are they sent to market?
8. How do farm products in Japan eventually get to the consumer?
9. How important are the following concepts to the Japanese economy?
   (a) imports.
   (b) exports.

If the social studies teacher is teaching a unit on Japan, individually or cooperatively with pupils, interest centers can be

developed. Items from Japan could be placed on a table or several tables in the classroom. As an example, the following objects pertaining to Japan might be placed on an interest center:

1. toys representative of what Japanese children play with.
2. traditional dress of Japanese people.
3. models of Japanese made cars.
4. a relief map of Japan.
5. a model farm scene in rural Japan.

Pupils individually could ask questions of each other and of the teacher pertaining to items on the interest center. A good class discussion may follow the identification of these problem areas or questions. Pupils, as an example, may ask the following questions pertaining to the interest center:

1. How are Japanese toys different from those that American children play with?
2. How have patterns of dress changed in Japan during the years?
3. How are Japanese cars assembled?
4. What is the land like in Japan and what kinds of crops are grown there?
5. How does farming in Japan differ from that in the United States?

Much research might be done by pupils using a variety of resources such as reference books, tapes, records, interviews, slides, filmstrips, maps, globes, and films, to get needed information to answer these questions.

In the preceding examples, it is noticed that pupils should have ample opportunities to identify questions and problems for which information can be gathered. The interests of pupils are very important when thinking of learning activities which should be provided in social studies. However, social scientists also have an important contribution to make in helping to determine key or structural ideas which pupils develop inductively pertaining to each social studies unit. These social scientists specialize in their academic area of specialty from the following disciplines in the social sciences:

1. anthropology
2. geography
3. history
4. sociology
5. political science or civics
6. economics

Balance in Unit Titles

An important question that an elementary school must answer pertaining to the social studies curriculum is which unit titles should be taught in the different grade levels so that rational balance exists among the regions of the world that pupils study. To be sure, pupils could devote most of their time in the social studies studying about the contributions and development of the western world. This is important for pupils. However, pupils also need to become thoroughly familiar, among other areas, with the Middle East, the Far East, India and

Pakistan, and nations of Africa. In fact, many major important happenings are occurring in these areas. Thus, pupils need to have a thorough understanding of the western world, but the changes, development, and contributions of the nonwestern world need also to be adequately emphasized in social studies.

Faculty members in an elementary school and the total school system involved in teaching the social studies should make a thorough study as to units taught presently in the different grade levels of the elementary school. Do revisions need to be made so that some kind of rational balance exists in different units that are taught in the social studies? Based upon diagnosis as to the units presently taught, faculty members may make rational decisions pertaining to pupils obtaining a world view which is comprehensive in the social studies.

Stating Objectives Precisely

There is a trend in elementary school social studies in stating objectives precisely. This means that observers generally would agree as to what is to be taught by looking at a statement of objectives. Thus pupil achievement can be measured if objectives are stated behaviorally. Objectives which are written behaviorally state what the learner is to do as a result of teaching. Consider the following objectives:

1. The pupils will write a fifty word paper on the Amazon River.
2. Pupils will develop democratic behavior.

In the first objective pupils will, as a result of teaching, develop understandings, concepts, and generalizations pertaining to the

Amazon River. Ultimately, pupils will be able to write a fifty word paper on the Amazon River. In the second objective, much vagueness exists as to what will be taught. There are various interpretations as to what democratic behavior is. The objective does not state how much of this behavior pupils are to develop. Thus, it cannot be measured if learners are achieving the objective.

Teachers must be precise in writing their objectives so that it can be determined what will be taught. In educational literature today much emphasis is placed upon teacher accountability. The teacher is then held accountable for what pupils are to learn. Thus, clearly written objectives state what pupils are to learn. Principals and supervisors can then determine what will be taught to pupils. Also, it is easier to select learning activities which guide learners in achieving objectives if each objective is clearly written. It is difficult to select appropriate learning activities if vague, ambiguous objectives are written. The final question arises as to how pupils are to be assessed if the objectives lack clarity. In situations with vague ends, it cannot be determined if objectives have been achieved.

A word of caution is necessary here. To be sure trivia and unimportant learnings can be stated precisely when writing specific objectives. The following objectives can be written precisely where no room exists in interpretation as to what will be taught:

1. The pupil will list in writing the capital city of each country in South America.

2. Pupils will recite orally five leading farm crops of each country of South America.
3. Pupils will list four leading manufactured products of each South America country.

In the above objectives, pupils have used the lowest level of cognition only and that is recall of facts. To be sure, there are important facts for pupils to learn. These facts, however, must be selected very carefully since there is much content that needs to be learned in different disciplines of knowledge. The teacher needs to have pupils engage in critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving. To be sure, pupils engage in recall of facts when engaging in critical and creative thinking as well as problem solving. However, pupils do something with the facts when engaging in higher levels of thinking. Comparing statements and evaluating them, coming up with unique, new, novel ideas, and the solving of problems are very important in a modern program of elementary school social studies. A democratic society demands that pupils become proficient in higher levels of thinking so that individuals become more effective in decision-making.

Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation of Achievement

If teachers are to evaluate pupil achievement well, continuous evaluation needs to be in evidence. Pupils need to be evaluated comprehensively so that all facets of achievement are assessed.

A teacher who does not continually evaluate pupil achievement will not know at what point or points pupils are not making continuous

progress. One can think of pupil achievement as being represented by points on a line or line segment. For pupils to achieve continuously on this line, evaluation needs to be emphasized continuously. Otherwise, the social studies teacher definitely cannot know if pupils are achieving well. If pupils have not developed a particular concept or generalization, they may not be successful in moving on to more complex learnings. Teachers of social studies must think of proper sequence for pupils in learning; otherwise continuous progress may not come about in learner achievement. Sequential learnings on the part of children can come about only when teachers assess learner progress continuously.

Too often, it has been thought and felt that paper-pencil tests alone can adequately assess achievement. To be sure, in many situations, good evaluation can come about with the use of true-false, multiple-choice, completion, matching, and essay test items. This would be true, especially, of understandings or cognitive domain objectives. To evaluate skills and attitudinal objectives, other forms of assessment need to be utilized. If a pupil is to develop skills in gathering information from using a set or several sets of reputable encyclopedias, hardly would a paper-test alone evaluate pupil achieve-ment effectively in this area. It would be good to actually observe pupils to determine if they can do the following when looking up information from encyclopedias:

1. the pupil can identify the correct topic heading for the information he/she is to gather. For example, if the pupil is to gather information on opium in a unit on the harmful use of drugs, which heading would be looked under in the appropriate reference book?

2. the pupil knows the letters of the alphabet and can find the appropriate place in the encyclopedia from which information is to be gathered.

3. the learner can comprehend the contents well when gathering information.

4. the child takes notes over what is read and develops an outline in proper sequence when utilizing the notes.

5. the pupil writes a summary of the ideas read from the encyclopedia using topic sentences, proper sequence in paragraphs, unity within paragraphs, and the necessary skills in the mechanics of writing (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, handwriting, and sentence structure).

6. the learner presents ideas gained from research effectively to the class. Listeners then have an inward desire in wanting to get major concepts and generalizations presented by the speaker.

7. the presenter utilizes appropriate audio-visual materials, such as pictures, slides, drawings, and the overhead projector, when presenting findings to the class.

When utilizing these guidelines to evaluate pupil achievement, the present level of achievement of each child must be assessed and then assist each learner to progress continuously to realize optimal achievement. The following is of utmost importance to remember: no two pupils will be at the same place in achievement when realizing these guidelines

or standards. Each pupil is at a different level of achievement.

It is important also to think of comprehensive evaluation in the social studies. Too frequently, pupil achievement has been evaluated pertaining to understandings objectives only. To be sure, these are very important objectives to achieve. Secondly in frequency of evaluation in terms of objectives, assessing which pupils have developed needed skills has been given some consideration. The category of attitudinal objectives, no doubt, is least often evaluated.

It is indeed very difficult to write a paper-pencil test to evaluate pupil attitudes. There are standardized tests which evaluate pupils in the area of attitudes or the affective domain. The social studies teacher needs to observe pupils to notice changes in feelings, values, and beliefs. Is there a positive change in this area from day to day or for longer periods of time? Generally, longer periods of time are needed to see growth in the affective domain. It may, of course, take years to change some attitudes. The teacher needs to evaluate the self in terms of the following criteria when thinking of assisting pupils in attitude development:

1. Are pupils interested in learning activities provided? If not, what kinds of activities should be selected so that positive attitudes may developed toward learning?

2. Do pupils understand what is taught? If learnings are not meaningful, much turning off will occur by pupils in realizing objectives.

3. Does the teacher assist each learner to be successful in the school situation? It is no wonder that pupils develop negative attitudes if they feel unsuccessful.

4. Are pupils being guided in social development so that they like working with others in committees, the class as a whole, and others in the larger environment?

5. Is the pupil developing and/or maintaining feelings of an adequate self concept? If learners feel inadequate to the tasks at hand, they will generally lack in total school achievement.

6. Does the teacher respect all pupils regardless of socioeconomic levels, color of skin, religious beliefs, and status within the class setting?

7. Are pupils assisted in developing respect for each other? Too frequently, pupils call each other mean names which cause feelings of resentment and reprisal.

8. Are pupils realizing desired understandings and skills through carefully selected units which assist in developing positive attitudes? No doubt, some units in the social studies would be eliminated and others would be added when answering this question. More social studies units need to be taught which guide learners in personal and social development.

Thus, it is necessary to evaluate pupil achievement in all facets of development using a variety of evaluation techniques. One very

important evaluation technique to utilize is teacher observation. Teacher observation needs to become objective in evaluating pupil achievement. Through reading, study, thought, empathy, and understanding, teachers can guide pupils in personal and social adjustment as well as other facets of development.

Being A Democratic Human Being

In a society which emphasizes democracy as a form of government, it is important for schools to stress a philosophy of education which is in harmony with ideals of democratic living. American society and its schools should emphasize a consistent philosophy which pertains to democracy as a form of government and also as a way of life. Teachers of social studies have gone to extremes when providing a psychological environment which assists pupils in developing to their optimum. Unfortunately these extremes did not harmonize with basic ideas of democratic living, nor did they help learners achieve to their highest possible capabilities. Consider the teacher on one end of the continuum who expects a pin-drop quiet classroom. Pupils are asked to speak only when the teacher asks the questions. The question asked at a given time may be directed to one pupil only. The answer required is factual and a "right" answer is wanted. Critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving would not be stressed. Each pupil would constantly face the front with little or no interaction with other pupils. Pupils would be reprimanded in front of others for "infracture" of strict rules and regulations. The teacher may strictly play the role of a policeman and disciplinarian in the classroom.

Contrast the autocratic teacher described above with one who is anarchic. The anarchic teacher would represent the other extreme on the continuum. This teacher would permit pupils generally to do as they wish with few, or perhaps, no restraints. The anarchic teacher would be the leader in the class situation if requested by pupils. Pupils roam around the room freely with little or no purpose involved in these movements. Pupils visit with each other whenever and wherever they wished with little or no respect for others.

Democracy as a way of living in the class situation stresses that there is mutual respect between and among pupils as well as faculty members.

Using Maps and Globes in the Social Studies

Ample opportunities should be given to pupils in the use of maps and globes. With a "shrinking world" due to better transportation and communication, it is more important than ever before for pupils to develop necessary skills to use maps and globes effectively.

It is difficult to say in which country of the world a crisis will develop that affects the interests of leading countries in the world. It is important for pupils to have ample knowledge pertaining to place geography whereby important areas of the world can be located on maps and globes. It is also important for pupils to develop more complex understandings such as how climate affects the kinds of crops grown in a given area, or how latitude affects the kind of temperature reading a given region of the world will have.

The following represent some major understandings that pupils should develop pertaining to the use of maps and globes.

1. Pupils should realize that distances can be computed by using the scale given on the map or globe. Maps and globes vary as to the number of miles/kilometers that would represented by one inch/centimeter as given in the scale of miles.

2. Specific places on the earth can be located using the concepts of "latitude" and "longitude".

3. North latitude refers to distance in degrees north of the equator while south latitude refers to distance in degrees south of the equator.

4. East longitude has reference to distance in degrees east of the prime meridian while west longitude relates to distance in degrees west of the prime meridian.

5. Distances north and south of the equator are measured along a meridian while distances east or west of the prime meridian are measured along a parallel.

6. The earth rotates from a west to east direction once each 24 hours (causes for day and night can be shown by using a flash-light, a darkened room, and a globe which represents a model of the planet earth). The imaginary line on which the earth rotates is called its axis.

7. The earth revolves around the sun approximately once in 365 1/4 days. On March 21 and September 21, approximately, the sun is directly overhead at noon on the equator. Whereas on June 21,

approximately, the sun is directly overhead at noon on the Tropic of Cancer located 23 1/2 degrees north of the equator; on December 21, the sun is overhead at noon on the Tropic of Capricorn located 23 1/2 degrees south of the equator. Other factors involved in determining temperature readings include elevation of land being considered, ocean currents, and nearness to bodies of water.

8. The axis of the earth on a globe points toward the north star. (On a bright day at noon each pupil can look directly at his/her shadow; the learner is facing north at this time. Pupils while facing north can be shown the position of the North Star as it would be at night).

9. Maps do not represent as accurately the surface of the earth as compared to globes. With the use of maps, however, a certain continent, country, or area can be studied more conveniently than on a globe since it will be represented on a larger area.

10. Some of the symbols used in legends on maps and globes are standard symbols. For example, symbols on maps which represent hospitals, railroad tracks, and paved roads are standard symbols. There are also symbols which vary from legend to legend on different maps and globes that are used.

11. Any circle has 360 degrees. There are 24 time zones in the world thus making each time zone have an approximate value of 15 degrees of longitude.

12. A hemisphere is represented by half of the earth; four hemispheres can be referred to - southern, northern, western, and eastern.

13. The direction of north on a map pertains to going directly to the North Pole; whereas the direction of south means to go directly to the South Pole. There are different projections of maps so the direction of north may not always be "up" on the map.

14. Low, middle, and high latitudes refer to specific areas or parts of maps and globes, such as the low latitudes lying north and south of the equator while the high latitudes are located around the north and south poles. The middle latitudes refer to those parts lying between the low latitudes and the high latitudes.

Current Affairs in the Social Studies

To keep the social studies curriculum updated, each elementary school should have a good current affairs program in all grades. Units which deal with history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science may become outdated unless recent happenings, events, and issues are brought in to the social studies. If the teacher is teaching a unit on "The United States Today," certainly the unit can become somewhat obsolete unless current affairs are brought into the ongoing unit of study. Too frequently, social studies teachers in teaching historical units have delved too thoroughly, no doubt,into units that deal with early American history such as "The Age of Exploration," "Colonization in the New World," "The Beginning of the United States," and others. Units which deal with the present are then slighted, or, perhaps, even omitted. The present is very important to elementary school children since this is the world they live in now and understand better than any other period of time. The pupil needs to

understand present trends, issues, problems, and strengths in the United States if he/she is to become a participating member in society working toward identifying problems and solving them. Certainly, a democratic citizen is one who greatly appreciates the positive in society and yet works for a stronger democracy as a form of government as well as a way of life.

Boundaries of countries change. Only with keeping up with the news can one be knowledgeable of new nations which arise and those which no longer exist. Witness the great number of new countries that have arisen on the continent of Africa after World War II! It is difficult for any individual to become thoroughly familiar with each country in Africa. Well educated persons have discovered to their amazement that they didn't know the name of a selected nation on the continent of Africa that came up on news broadcasts. The surface of the earth has also changed in terms of geographical features. Earthquakes, volcanoes, folds, and faults have altered the surface of the earth. Current affairs can help pupils keep up-to-date in terms of happenings in the field of geography. Certainly, space feats and explorations have done much to change our knowledge of the moon and selected planets, in particular.

There are many important current issues and events in the field of economics. The rate of employment and unemployment vary in percent from time to time within diverse countries. Many nations have problems in balancing imports with exports. This situation may change from time to time. Thus, much emphasis can be placed upon economics in a modern program of current affairs instruction. The total amount of money involved in the gross national product (GNP) of any country can vary

from year to year. Current affairs items also assist learners to understand the meaning of inflation as it pertains to buying goods and services in any country.

In the area of sociology, many current affair items need to be studied to keep this area of the social sciences updated. Overpopulation, of course, has not always been a problem on the face of the earth. Today, it is a major problem in many countries of the world. Norms of a subculture change and are modified due to reevaluating of beliefs, values, and ideals. Norms also change as a result of borrowing ideas from other subcultures and societies. New inventions bring changes within any group of people.

In the area of anthropology, current events and issues can and do become a part of news broadcasts. A subculture is discovered for the first time and this group is in the stone age. New excavations release findings pertaining to a particular tribe or civilization of long ago. Recommendations for improving schools, homes, and other institutions in society are made by leading anthropologists.

Political science and current affairs instruction have much in common. The Security Council, General Assembly, and the Office of the Secretariat of the United Nations continually make news headlines in terms of decisions and recommendations made which affect various nations of the world. The United Nations, of course, is an attempt made at world government. It is rather common for listeners to news broadcasts on radio and television to hear of political leaders of different nations having left their positions for various reasons and a new government has stepped in. This presents opportunities for pupils to

learn more about the forms of government of different nations of the world. When pupils study such units as "Living in Great Britain" or "Visiting Canada," they may be developing learnings in depth pertaining to Parliament, the Prime Minister, and other facets of government of these countries. When listening to news broadcasts, one hears of decisions made by Parliament of either Great Britain or Canada. Thus, items pertaining to political science can well become an important part of the current affairs program in the modern elementary school.

Kaltsounis[2] wrote the following statements on the value of current affairs instruction:

1. They are a source for meaningful issues.
2. They bring texbook materials up to date.
3. They convey the changing nature of society as well as the persistence of some issues.
4. They enhance the children's ability to judge and distinguish between fact and opinion.
5. They help children become knowledgeable about their world--a valuable characteristic of citizenship.

Using the Bulletin Board in Current Affairs

The social studies teacher needs to think of ways to stimulate pupil interest in current affairs instruction. To be sure, some pupils have little or no interest in this area. Thus, the teacher must provide interesting learning activities which will capture the interests of pupils. One way might be to develop a bulletin board display pertaining

[2]Theodore Kaltsounis. Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School. Second Edition. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1987, page 227.

to pictures of current happenings. An appealing caption should be a part of the display. The caption orientates the reader to the contents on the bulletin board. As an example, pictures pertaining to the following happenings can be neatly placed on the bulletin board:

1. conflict in the middle East.
2. The President of the United States presenting the state of the union message.
3. the Security Council in session at the United Nations headquarters in New York.
4. the energy crisis.

Pupils with teacher guidance may ask the following questions pertaining to these pictures:

1. What will eventually happen in the Middle East between competing and opposing sides?
2. What recommendations did the President make in his annual state of the union message?
3. How are decisions made in the Security Council?
4. How can the energy crisis be solved?

Answers to the above problems should be discussed in an informal atmosphere. Respect for the thinking of others is of utmost importance. All pupils should participate in the discussion if possible. Pupils who dominate the discussion or participate excessively should be guided in sensing the importance of all participating in the ongoing learning activity. The self-concept of each pupil is very important. Each pupil should be praised even if there is a very, very slight degree of

improvement in performance. This helps pupils in developing self confidence and in wishing to participate in current affairs programs. By getting pupils interested in the ongoing current affairs program in the elementary school, learners will transfer these learnings to situations involving listening to news broadcasts on radio and television in the home.

Jarolimek[3] wrote the following on the developmetn of bulletin boards:

> The teacher should prepare a display of interesting news pictures and stories to which the child can turn for information concerning current affairs. Because items on the news bulletin board should be changed frequently, it should be in a place in the room where children pass regularly. A point near the doorway is a good location.
>
> It is good procedure to discuss the significance of the news articles in class before they are posted on the bulletin board. the display should contain items of national and international import as well as items of local interest, sports stories, developments in science, people in the news, perhaps even oddities and jokes for variety and spice. It is helpful to have various sections of the bulletin board specifically designated for such groupings as local news, science in the news, news of our country, and global happenings. This serves as a means of organizing the display in a meaningful way.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE CURRICULUM

Philosophical considerations are certainly inherent in developing the curriculum. It almost appears that each decision made by the teacher is based upon one or more schools of thought in philosophy. In most situations then, a different choice exists, than what was made, in selecting objectives, learning activities, and appraisal procedures.

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[3]John Jarolimek. Social Studies in Elementary Education. Seventh Edition. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1986, page 215.

Accountability of Teachers

The accountability movement is quite prevalent. The lay public, parents included, want to know how well students are achieving in schools. Thus, strong faith is emphasized in testing movements. Standardized tests, state wide tests, district wide tests, and teacher written tests are to provide answers on how well pupils are achieving. Much money and time goes into testing. Observable results are wanted from students as to how much has been learned. Teaching and testing go hand in hand. To be a good teacher means to have quality measurable results from students. The test results from these students must be high, according to standards set by the norms of the standardized tests, as well as by those involved in developing state and district wide tests.

Test results are then compared among the different states. Results of state wide and district wide tests are also compared. Thus, test results within a state provide data for comparing achievement among school districts within the borders of the involved state. Also, test results among the separate schools are compared within a school district. Competition becomes stronger to excel among the states to be the leading state in terms of student achievement. Within a state, a school district wants to be the leader in having the highest test results within that geographical region. Or, within a school district, a separate school wants the published distinction of having the highest test results within the reporting unit.

A career ladder emphasis includes teacher competition to have his/her students achieve well in tests in order to move to the highest level in salary. Salary and prestige objectives are motives in wishing to move higher on the career ladder. If there are four levels in moving higher on the career ladder, students within the classroom of the involved teacher will need to have measurable test results which demonstrate the concept of excellence. Excellence means high test results. The results from the tests are observable and objective. Subjectivity then is not involved in noticing gains in achievement from students.

There is a definite philosophy inherent in the measurement movement. Certainly, there is much faith in that test results truly give us a vital means of ascertaining student progress. A lack of trust exists in utilizing other means to determine learner achievement.

Accountability thus emphasizes the following:

1. It can be determined in measurable terms what students are to learn. There is certainty involved here in believing that specialists can identify that which is essential and vital for student acquisition.

2. The teacher can select those learning opportunities which aid pupils to attain the stated precise ends. All other stimuli ideally in learning opportunities should be omitted. Only those stimuli in activities and experiences should be emphasized which stress goal attainment by students.

3. There are definite procedures which may be utilized to measure student achievement. What pupils have learned is then measurable and not internal within the learner.

Humanism and the Curriculum

Humanism, as a psychology of learning, emphasizes students choosing, within a framework, which learning activity to pursue and which to omit. There are personal decisions and choices to make by students in terms of which experiences to choose and which to overlook. There, however, must be adequate tasks from which a student may select in order to achieve sequentially and continually.

Humanism emphasizes that learners attempt to achieve self actualization. To attain self actualization, each pupil's physiological (food, shelter, rest, water, and clothing), safety, love and belonging, as well as esteem needs must be met first. The individual selects means of attaining the optimal self. No other being can do this for the pupil. The involved student makes choices and decisions.

Which methods of teaching then might humanism emphasize as a psychology of learning?

1. Learning centers. An adequate number of stimulating learning centers and tasks must be in evidence. Only then can each student select sequential tasks which meet personal needs. Choices are made on the basis of attaining self actualization or optimal progress.

2. Individualized reading. The pupil, not the teacher, selects which library book to read. A wide variety of topics and titles, as well as levels of complexity, need to be inherent in the library books. A plentiful supply of purposeful library books emphasizes that pupils

may select as well as omit reading selected library books which do not meet personal needs and interests.

After the completion of reading a chosen book, pupils with teacher guidance may appraise the former's progress in comprehension of content and in attitudes.

3. A contract system. Pupils individually with teacher guidance choose which specific projects to complete. The exact descriptions of each project is listed on the contract. The due date for completion of the project is entered onto the contract. Both the learner and the teacher sign the agreed upon contract. Thus, the involved student has considerable input as to the purposes or objectives of the contract. What is done to carry out the terms of the contract is planned by the student with teacher guidance. The completed project is appraised by those involved in developing the contract, namely the pupil and the teacher.

Programmed Learning

Programmed learning emphasizes quite a different philosophy of education as compared to humanism. The latter stresses students making sequential choices in terms of learning activities. A psychological curriculum is then in evidence. Toward the other end of the continuum, programmed learning advocates a logical curriculum. Thus, the programmer in developing programmed materials selects subject matter for students to acquire. The content is divided into small amounts of subject matter to learn in sequential steps. Thus, a student reads a

few items, such as several sentences or an arithmetic number pair or fact, responds to a completion item, checks his/her answer with the correct one as provided by the programmer. The programmed items can be presented in textbook or software/microcomputer form.

A student responding correctly to a completion item is rewarded and is ready for the next sequential item in linear programming. If an incorrect response is given, the learner now knows the correct answer, as provided by the programmer and then is still ready for the next sequential item.

The same/similar procedure may be utilized again and again in programmed instruction: read, respond, and check for each sequential step of learning. With the use of software and the microcomputer, reinforcement of each correct response may well be shown with a smile face or a statement, such as "that's correct" on the monitor.

Programmed instruction emphasizes:

1. A logical curriculum in that the programmer determines sequential items of content for students to acquire.

2. No input from students in terms of learner-teacher planning of what the former is to learn.

3. Measurement of each step of learning by the student so that incorrect acquired content is not practiced.

Thus, a student knows immediately if he/she was correct or incorrect when giving a specific response.

A Hierarchy of Objectives

Robert Gagne, a leading psychologist, emphasizes that teachers go through sequential steps in planning objectives for pupils to attain. Thus, to develop the sequential precise objectives, the teacher first of all asks himself/herself, "What do I want students to learn?"

Once that broad question has been answered in writing, the instructor writes measurable objectives in sequence which students need to achieve in order to realize the overall goal of "What do I want students to learn?" If the objectives are not in a proper order, the students individually will not be successful achievers. Certain objectives then will not be achieved. Perhaps, one or more objectives need to be written to be ordered within the previously stated ends. Thus, a smaller step of achievement may be in evidence for the learner to move in the direction of attaining the next more difficult objective. Sometimes, the gap is too large between objectives A and B and the involved student is foreordained to experience failure. Placing one or more objectives between A and B can make for successful student learning. Objectives then need to be arranged in ascending order of difficulty for optimal progress to be in evidence, for the involved student.

Robert Gagne' emphasizes:

1. measurable sequential objectives for students to achieve.
2. teachers writing the ordered objectives in a logical curriculum.

3. pupils being successful in achieving each objective due to appropriate sequence in learning.

Jerome Bruner and the Structure of Knowledge

Jerome Bruner, psychologist from Harvard University, advocates students achieving structural content in each curriculum area. The structure of knowledge should be identified by academicians in their academic area of specialty. Thus for the social studies curriculum, social scientists such as historians, geographers, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and economists on the college and university levels would select the structure of knowledge (generalizations) from each of their respective areas of academic specialty. Structural ideas provide the framework for any subject matter area. The content indicates how the generalizations (broad ideas) are related. Too frequently, students have learned isolated subject matter. Instead, Jerome Bruner advocates that structural ideas identified by academicians represent related subject matter as perceived by the involved academician, such as the historian as an example. Trivia would then not be learned by students since vital content has been carefully selected by the involved academician. The structural ideas then would be available to teachers. Teachers may guide students to achieve these structural ideas in the latters own words. A spiral curriculum would be in evidence since students may attain the structural ideas at each successive level of complexity as they progress through the different levels of schooling.

The social studies teacher needs to stress methods of acquiring structural ideas as advocated and utilized by academicians. Thus, for example, primary and secondary sources used by the historian should be utilized by students on the elementary and secondary levels of schooling. With emphasis being placed upon methods of study and structural ideas promoted by academicians, students may achieve key ideas inductively.

Jerome Bruner recommended that structural ideas be achieved through induction by using enactive (concrete), iconic (illustrations using diverse audio-visual aids), as well as symbolic (abstract) learnings in achieving sequential ideas.

Bruner deemphasizes:

1. deductive (lecture, expositive, and heavy use of explanations in teaching students) methods of instruction.
2. abstract (reading and writing) content comprising the curriculum. Rather, enactive, iconic, and symbolic procedures need to be utilized in sequence.
3. isolated, trivia content being stressed in any given curriculum area. Content needs to be related.

Idealism in the Curriculum

The late Herman Horne (1874-1946) was a leading advocate of idealism as a philosophy of education. Dr. Horne emphasized that mind is real. The mind or soul survives the body after death. More than one lifetime for individuals is necessary in order to move closer to the Absolute or the universal mind. An idea centered curriculum is necessary in moving from the finite to the Infinite.

A liberal arts general education is advocated by Dr. Horne. Thus, history and geography in the social studies, the fine arts, religion, philosophy, the language arts, and the sciences provide content for general education for all students. Thus, the mind is liberated in a liberal arts curriculum. Vocational education is definitely not recommended. This can come later after a quality general education for students has been secured.

In general education, universal ideas are developed, rather than specific, isolated facts. Mental development is highly important for learners. Only then does higher levels of cognition become significant in the curriculum.The limited person must achieve more in the direction of the Absolute.

Dr. Horne would not advocate education stressing:

1. vocational education for students. Rather, a quality liberal arts general education curriculum needs to be in the offing.

2. Object centered teaching-learning situations such as in science units, and thus minimize literature, religion, history, geography, the fine arts, and philosophy, in particular.

3. the physical facets of human development as being superior to mental achievement in the curriculum.

Existentialism in the Curriculum

Existentialism emphasizes pupils making choices and decisions in the curriculum. Restraints on learners must truly be minimal to stress

an existentialist philosophy of learning. The individual first exists and then chooses goals to make the self (essences). Each person did not ask to be born. Rather, each human arrives on the scene and then is forced to make choices. Goals to attain are really not given to any person. Rather, they must be chosen and selected freely if the desire is there or not.

Each choice and decision is made in a ridiculous environment. Life in and of itself is not rational. It is absurd instead. But within the absurd, life continues and values must be chosen. Uneasiness and anxiety are inherent in persons when choosing occurs. It is overwhelming to select among alternatives in daliy life. But to choose means to be human. The individual can permit others to make decisions involving oneself. However, that person ceases to be a human being. To make decisions is to be human.

Decisions made are subjective and definitely not objective. Curriculum areas that contain subjective content are superior to those that possess so called objective subject matter. Thus, the fine arts, the humanities, history, philosophy, and religion indeed become significant curriculum areas.

The individual chooses and makes decisions. He/she cannot blame others for what occurs and transpires. The decision maker then is responsible for choices made. No other person need be blamed if the results of a decision turn out to be negative.

An existentialist curriculum does not emphasize:

1. measurable objectives for students to attain.
2. learning activities selected by the teacher.

3. evaluation procedures chosen by the teacher.

Rather, as much as possible, students individually need to select goals, activities, and experiences, as well as appraisal procedures. The student is responsible for his/her own personal life and thus must make responsible decisions.

Realism in the Curriculum

A realist believes that a person can know all or part of the real environment as it truly is. The learner does not receive ideas only about the natural/social environment but can know reality as it is. He/she may actually receive a replica or blue print of what has been observed, heard, tasted, touched, and felt.

Since the individual can know the real environment as it truly is, the curriculum area of science becomes relevant indeed. General science or the seperate academic disciplines of astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, zoology, botany, and ecology may well provide content which provides learnings as the world truly is.

Mathematics which is precise and has patterns can also provide content which can be known as it truly is. Logical thinking provides accurate content to students. Mathematics is also the language of science. With precise statements made pertaining to phenomena in science, accurate content in mathematics may describe completely and comprehensively objects in the scientific realm.

Realism emphasizes:

1. individuals being able to know phenomena the way it truly is. A replica or duplicate of the environment then exists in the senses of the human being.

2. the relevance and significance of science and mathematics in the school curriculum. The involved subject matter here is objective and quantifiable.

3. accurate content, not subjective ideas. Subject matter learned must be objective, independent of the learner.

4. subject matter from history and geography also contains objective content. History with its names, dates, places, and events centers itself around content knowable by the knower as it truly is. The same is true of geography, with its geographical features of mountains, rivers, lakes, oceans, plains, plateaus, peninsulas, and seas.

5. even the subject area of values and morals can be objectified. Thus, a set of values/morals can be agreed upon if they have stood the test of time. Subjectivity in values and morals where truth is in the eye of the beholder needs to be avoided.

Experimentalism and the Curriculum

Experimentalists emphasize the world of experience. Any person can only know what he/she has experienced. The real world as it truly is can not be verified through experience. Nor does one only know ideas about the real world as idealists emphasize. Rather, what is significant is experiences of human beings.

Each person experiences problems. The problems need identification. Information or data needs to be acquired directly related to the problem being solved. Content is not learned for the sake of doing so, that is knowledge for its own sake, but, subject matter is instrumental. Instrumentality of subject matter is involved when it is utilized to solve problems. Once adequate data has been acquired, then a hypotheses or possible answer to the problem should be attained. Hypotheses are tentative, mot absolutes, and subject to testing in real life situations. The hypotheses may need to be revised as the consequences of reaults indicate it is necessary to do so. The complete act of thought is involved within the framework of problem solving.

Life in school should not be seperate from that which exists in society. School and society are integrated, not isolated entities. A utilitarian curriculum is then in evidence. Society has its problems. The problems need identification and solutions.

In society, groups identify and solve problems. Thus, in the school curriculum, committees need to engage in problem solving experiences.

Too frequently, schools have seperated the curriculum from the learner. Physical punishment or methods of embarrassment have been utilized to encourage student learning. The student then becomes sperated physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally from the curriculum. Rather, the teacher needs to provide interesting activities which promote effort in learning. Interest and effort then become one and not seperate concepts. The interests that pupils possess provide the effort or encouragement for learning.

Experimentalists do not emphasize:

1. a school curriculum seperated from those activities and experiences useful in society.

2. dualisms such as interest and effort, school and society, and the student versus the curriculum.

3. subject matter learned outside the framework of problem solving situations. Subject matter then becomes a means to an end and that end being to solve vital problems.

4. drill and practice per se in teaching and learning. Rather, subject matter must be meaningful and instrumental to that which is perplexing and needs solutions.

Essentialism and the Curriculum

The late William Chandler Bagley (1874-1946) emphasized essentialism in the curriculum. Common learnings vital to and for all students emphasize the heart of essentialist educators. Essentialism may be thought of as general education. Those facts, concepts, and generalizations needed by students in general, comprise the essentials.

Dr. Bagley advocated the teaching of selected academic areas which had stood the test of time. The changeless, rather than the changing curriculum was emphasized. The following stable academic areas were to be taught:

1. history and geography. These two academic disciplines have been taught through the centuries to students. The concept of social studies should not be emphasized. Rather, history and geography represent stable content and the subject matter therein is essential for all learners.

2. grammar, writing, and oral communication. The curriculum area of grammar with its parts of speech and how words are utilized in sentences provide essential content for students to become increasingly proficient in writing and speaking. Through teacher determined objectives, pupils can become proficient in communication.

3. science and mathematics. The precise disciplines that provide subject matter for both science and mathematices need emphasis. The exact disciplines, not opinions, need to be adequately emphasized in teaching and learninbg. Vital subject matter must be acquired by students.

4. reading and spelling. These two curriculum areas are basic to learning in the previously named academic areas such as in items one, two, and three above. For example, pupils read to learn in each academic discipline.

5. firm discipline. Obedience on the part of students is important. With excellent discipline and obedient pupils, teachers may then teach and students learn.

Dr. Bagley opposed:

1. an activity centered curriculum which takes excessively much time to implement. Rather, a well disciplined classroom provides students with ample opportunities to learn the basics.

2. pupil-teacher planning. The teacher is educated and trained to teach. Students lack that maturity. Thus, the teacher needs to select essential objectives, learning activities, and appraisal procedures.

3. career education curricula. Rather, a subject matter curriculum needs implementation. There are basic learnings for each student to acquire. After the basics have been mastered by all pupils, then careers can be explored and emphasized. But first, essential subject matter needs to be attained by each pupil.

There are diverse philosophies which may be stressed in the curriculum.

1. Accountability movements advocate that measurable results are required from students. Teacher proficiency is demonstrated in terms of measured demonstrable achievement from each student.

2. Humanism stresses students making choices to terms of which objectives and learning activities to pursue.

3. Programmed learning emphasizes students progress in small sequential steps by the programmer. Feedback to students in terms of each correct response given is provided continuously and immediately.

4. Robert Gagne's hierarchy of objectives stresses pupils achieving measurable objectives carefully sequenced by the teacher.

5. Jerome Bruner believes that students need to achieve structural ideas as identified by professional academicians. The structure of knowledge should be learned inductively through enactive (concrete), iconic (semi-concrete), and symbolic (abstract) materials.

6. Idealists stress the importance of general education for all students in which the latter move from the finite to the Infinite being. Vocational education is not recommended until a comprehensive program of general education has been completed.

7. Existentialists believe that students need to make choices and decisions. Life itself is absurd and ridiculous. Choices and decisions by students within a flexible curriculum need to be in the offing.

8. Realists believe that students in part can know the real world as it truly is. Thus, reality in the worlds of science and mathematics, in particular, needs depth teaching. Subjective content in the curriculum needs to be avoided.

9. Experimentalists advocate students acquire subject matter to solve problems. Facts, concepts, and generalizations learned are instrumental. The concept instrumental emphasizes the utilization of subject matter to solve problems. Subject matter then is not learned for its own sake.

10. Essentialists believe there is a common core of subject matter which is stable and necessary for all students. This is basic subject matter and is definitely not related to those academic areas which are elective courses.

In Summary

Teachers, principals, and supervisors must study the following in working toward a modern social studies curriculum:

1. objectives in the social studies.
2. trends in teaching social studies.
3. scope and sequence.
4. materials used in teaching.
5. readiness in learning.
6. number of units taught in a year.
7. emphasis to be placed on the structure of knowledge.
8. balance in unit titles.
9. the use of specific objectives.
10. thorough evaluation of pupil achievement.
11. democratic living in the classroom.
12. the use of maps and globes in social studies units.
13. current affairs in social studies units.
14. pupil interest in current affairs.

Questions to Consider

1. In your own thinking, which understandings, skills, and attitudinal objectives should pupils achieve in elementary school social studies?

2. Evaluate the structure of knowledge in terms of strengths and weaknesses when it becomes a part of the elementary school social studies program.

3. Visit several classroom situations to observe the teaching of current affairs. Which objectives were the teacher emphasizing?

4. In your own thinking, how can learning activities in the social studies be selected carefully to provide for individual differences?

5. How can pupil achievement be satisfactorily evaluated in elementary school social studies?

6. What can the social studies teacher do to assist learners who come from disadvantaged areas?

7. How might elementary school social studies help pupils to achieve at a higher level in the area of human relations?

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